

1609/1495. x

A
S E R M O N

Preach'd in

Christ's-Church, Dublin,

Before His Excellency

The Lord Carteret;

O N

Thursday, Nov. 5. 1724.

Being the Anniversary Day of Thanksgiving for the
Discovery of the ~~Gun-Powder~~ Plot,

And for the Happy Arrival of His Late Majesty King
WILLIAM in Great-Britain.

By *EDW. STINGE*, M. A. Prebendary of *St. Patrick's, Dublin*;
and Chaplain to His EXCELLENCY.

Publish'd by His Excellency's Special Command.

D U B L I N:

Printed by *A. Rhames*, for *Robert Owen*, Bookseller in
Skinner-Row. 1724.

W^d ii



A

S E R M O N

Preach'd in
Christ-Church, Dublin, &c.

2 Cor. i. 10.

Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver, in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us.

TO discover the Import and Design of these Words, 'tis necessary to look back to *ver. 8.* of this Chapter, where *St. Paul* gives the *Corinthians* an Account of some Trouble, which not long before came to him in *Asia*. What this Trouble was there is no occasion now to enquire; 'Tis sufficient to know, it was some very great one, from which he had no Hopes, by any Strength or Power of his own, to escape: He therefore owns his Deliverance to have
B
been

been wrought by the Hand of God; and this occasion being given he enlarges his Thoughts, acknowledges the Interposition of the Divine Providence in several other Deliverances that had been wrought for him, and declares his firm Trust and Reliance thereon, as a sure Defence against all future Evils and Calamities.

Here then we have a very proper Pattern to copy after, in the Performance of the Duty this Day incumbent on us. We are met together to praise God for signal Mercies already received, and to implore the Continuance of his Favour and Protection. Now to perform this Service barely with our Mouths, and in outward Shew and Gesture, is vain and impious; and 'tis impossible to perform it otherwise, unless, as *St. Paul* does, we acknowledge the Interposition of the Divine Infinite Wisdom and Power in the Management of humane Affairs: This will make it rational in us to ascribe those Deliverances which particularly occasion the present Solemnity to the good Providence of God; If besides these, there be any other great Blessings more lately conferr'd on us, It will lead us, to reflect on them also, and, according to the Example of *St. Paul*, to acknowledge, that the same God who in times past hath *delivered us from a great death, doth yet deliver us*; And when, by these Means, we come to know and consider the great things God hath done for us already, We shall have a more just Sense of the great and infinite Value of his Protection, and consequently be dispos'd to use those Methods, which
alone



alone can give us sure and certain Hopes, *that he will yet deliver us.*

That I may contribute what in me lies, to raise in your Minds these Sentiments, which on this Occasion become rational Men and Christians, my Business in the following Discourse shall be this.

1. To give some short Account of the Reasons why we ought to consider all the Blessings that befall us as coming from God, and accordingly return Thanks for them.

2. To consider the Nature of those Deliverances which particularly occasion the present Solemnity, and shew that they are such as justly exact from us our best Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.

3. To enquire whether there be any other signal Mercy more lately vouchsafed to us, which may also require our solemn Thanks, and warrant our saying with *St. Paul*, that God who *delivered us from so great a death, doth yet deliver us.* And,

4. *Lastly*, To shew how we ought to form our future Conduct, both to manifest a rational and Christian Gratitude for Benefits already receiv'd; and to lay a sure Foundation of future Trust in the Divine Favour and Protection.

1. The general Reasons why we ought to receive all Blessings as coming from God, are so plain and obvious, that much need not be said to explain or illustrate them.

Whoever

Whoever pursues the Dictates of his own Reason with moderate Attention, will easily be led to acknowledge, that God, who at first created the Universe by the Word of his Power, continues always to govern it by his Providence; and that which humane Reason, rightly exercis'd, discovers to be true, is fully declar'd, and inculcated in the Christian Revelation. Now he who acknowledges this general Doctrine, does at the same time confess, that all Events that do or can happen, must originally and ultimately come from God, because this is the plain Notion of the Providence of God, that He conducts, disposes, and governs the Universe, and every Part thereof according to His good Pleasure.

But now; Tho' it be in general most true, that all Events whatsoever do come from God, yet there is a very remarkable Difference in the manner in which they are to be ascrib'd to him; To form a clear Notion of which 'twill be necessary to observe two Things:

1. The first is this: That God, in the first Formation of all things, has given to the several Orders of Beings several Powers, and has also settled certain Laws of Nature, according to which the various Parts of the material World move and perform their several Operations in a regular uniform manner: This being so, 'tis manifest that to the Production of many Effects, no other Act or Concurrence of the Divine Power is necessary, beside this general one, by which
he

he preserves every Creature, and continues to it the Exercise of those natural Powers and Capacities of acting, with which in its first Formation it was endued.

2. The second thing to be observ'd is this; That God, who originally gave these Powers and fix'd these Laws, has at all times a Power of altering them, or suspending their common and ordinary Effects, and does actually exercise this Power on those Occasions, which he in his Infinite Wisdom knows to require such an Interposition. That God has such a Power every one must own, who owns him to be an intelligent infinitely perfect *free* Being: There are also some Instances in which the Exercise of it is manifest, and many more wherein, according to our best Apprehensions of things, 'tis highly rational to allow it, for this plain Reason, Because 'tis often found that Natural Causes, apply'd with the utmost Skill and Dexterity of the wisest Men, do often fail to produce their genuine Effects, according to the Reflexion of Solomon, *I returned and saw under the Sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance, i. e.* The secret Direction of an infinite overruling Power, *happens to them all.* Eccl. ix. 11.

From these two Principles then We are easily led to discover a two-fold Notion of Divine Providence.

1. The first is; That, As the Original Universal Cause of all created Beings, and of all the Powers
C and

and Faculties with which they are endued, He, by a continu'd Act of his Power, supports and preserves them in being, and allows them such an Exercise of their Powers as is suitable to their respective Natures, and may be consistent with the Attainment of the Ends design'd by him in the whole.

2. The other Notion of Divine Providence is, That by a particular Interposition on some certain Occasions, He disposes things of set Purpose to the Production of some certain Effect; the former of these is called God's *Ordinary* or *General Providence*; the latter, *Extraordinary* or *particular*: The Operations of the one are constant and uniform, and the Moment they cease, the Universe, and all that is in it, must cease to have a Being: But the Operations of the other We may rationally conceive to be less frequent, on certain great Occasions, which are worthy a new and particular Interposition.

To distinguish accurately between those Events, which flow from the one and the other, is most commonly a Task too hard for humane Understanding. In some few Cases indeed we may determine with sufficient Certainty, because one Side of the Question may be reduced to a Contradiction, as is manifest in the Case of miraculous Operations on the one hand, and that of the Production of moral Evil on the other. But in most of the Occurrences of Life, 'tis not possible for us clearly to distinguish between the Ordinary and Extraordinary Operations of God's Providence: Nor

is it any way necessary We should, because to which-
ever We ascribe them, no Absurdity follows, be-
cause also, which is most material, there is either
way a sufficient Foundation for the Performance of
those Duties which Right Reason and the Christian
Religion require.

To instance in that which We are oblig'd this Day
to perform, the Duty of Thanksgiving. Suppose a
single Person or Nation to have been deliver'd from
an imminent Danger, or by some fortunate Event to
have receiv'd a considerable Increase of Happiness;
Whether this be conceiv'd to happen according to the
general Laws of Nature, or to result from a particu-
lar Interposition of Providence, there is, I say, either
way a Rational Foundation for Praise and Thankf-
giving; Because either way the Blessing must be ac-
knowledg'd to come from God: If a particular In-
terposition be supposed, the Case is clear, and admits
of no Dispute: But tho' it be conceiv'd to result from
general Laws, yet Since these Laws are at all times
subject to his Power, Since All the Effects and Con-
sequences of them are ever open to his View, It fol-
lows that 'tis his Will, that that Deliverance should
be wrought, or that happy Event be produc'd in Fa-
vour of that Person or Nation, or otherwise He might,
and would alter the Course of things, so as to stop
and prevent it; And doubtless, if it be the Will of
God, that any Blessing befall Mankind, 'tis their Du-
ty to offer unto Him the Tribute of Praise and Thankf-
giving.

And

And thus I have given you as clear an Account, as in so short a Compass I was able, of the Reasons why we ought to receive all Blessings as coming from God, and accordingly return Thanks to him for them. I proceed therefore to the second thing propos'd.

2. To consider the Nature of those Deliverances which particularly occasion the present Solemnity, and shew that they are such as justly exact from us our best Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.

To form a right Notion of the Value and Importance of these Deliverances, It may not be amiss to take a short View of Humane Nature, that thereby we may see what State and Condition of Life is really most productive of Mens true Welfare and Happiness.

Now since Right Reason and the Christian Religion inform us, that Man is design'd for an Eternal State of Existence in a Life to come, after this short and transitory one shall have an end; It follows, that The Happiness of each single Person, and consequently of any given Number, is properly to be consider'd with a View to both these.

If We consider Men with Respect to the Concerns of this Life, 'Tis obviously necessary to their Welfare and Happiness, that they enter into Society; Because in this Way they are most secure from violent Invasions either of their Lives or Properties. For whereas in a State of Nature the only Opposition that can be made
to

to unjust Force, arises from the single Strength of the injur'd Person, which is no more than equal to that of the Aggressor, In Society, where the Natural Strength and Powers of great Numbers are united, an Insult offer'd to any one, draws on the Offender the Power of the whole; by which Means He commonly undergoes a Punishment proportion'd to his Offence, Others of evil Dispositions are terrified and restrain'd from offending, and the Honest and Virtuous are better secur'd in the Enjoyment of the innocent Comforts and Satisfactions of Life, than in any other way they could possibly be.

The great End then, which Men propose by living together in Society, being to secure each other from Violence, and this End being no way to be obtain'd, but by an Union of the Natural Strength and Powers of the several Members, It follows that in every Society, there must be some Form or other of Civil Government, because otherwise there is no Principle of Union to direct the distinct Wills and Actions of single Persons to a publick End, *i. e.* the Good of the whole Body.

But the Forms of Civil Government which obtain in the World are various, and not all equally fitted to answer the general End of their Institution: Where, for instance, the Lives, Liberties, and Properties of all are subject to the arbitrary Will and Pleasure of a single Man, the True Ends of Government are so little answer'd, that 'tis really worse to live under it than in a State of Nature.

For as the Prince's Will and Inclination to do hurt may be as great as that of any other Person, with whom, in a State of Nature, We are upon a Foot of Equality; So is his Power infinitely greater, because in him the Force and Strength of Numbers is united, and may therefore be effectually employ'd to execute his evil, oppressive, or cruel Designs: From whence it is manifest, that no Civil Government can be in any Degree perfect, or productive of the common Happiness of Mankind, where the last Resort of Power is the Arbitrary Will and Pleasure of a single Person.

In order therefore to attain the great and valuable Ends for which Men enter into Society, 'tis necessary that some General Rules or Laws be fix'd and mutually agreed to by the several Constituent Parts of the publick Body, according to which the Power is to be dispos'd, and the Government administred for the good of the whole; and because in the first Institution of a Society, 'tis impossible to foresee every thing that may be useful or necessary to its well-being in all future times, 'tis further requisite, that there should somewhere be lodg'd a Power of annulling the old and making new Laws and Constitutions for the Publick Good.

Now if this Power be lodg'd in the Hands of any one Person, He then is possess'd of a Sovereignty absolutely unlimited and arbitrary, and the whole Body are as much Slaves to his Will, as if no Laws had ever been made: For to be able to change, annul, or dispense with all Laws, or make new ones at Pleasure,

is to be able to impose his Arbitrary Will, as the sole Law to which the People are to give Obedience. And therefore to avoid the many dismal Consequences of such a despotick Power, 'tis necessary that the Body of the People should some way or other, either collectively, or by their Representatives consent to all Changes and Alterations made in these Laws: And in this consists the proper formal Notion of Liberty in Social Life.

Where therefore a Civil Constitution is form'd on these Maxims, where there is such a well-temper'd equal Distribution of Power in the several principal Parts of the Society, that no one can easily oppress or destroy another, Where the Fundamental Laws are so fram'd, as best to promote the Good of the whole, to give every Man a fair and equal Title to the Enjoyment of his Life, Liberty, and Property, Where all material Changes made in these Laws must be made by the Consent of the People themselves, or a Number of chosen Persons, whose Interests are interwoven with those of their Fellow-Subjects, And where these Laws are steadily and impartially executed by prudent, active, and vigilant Ministers, evident it is, that by the reciprocal Performance of all the Duties relative to these Laws, by those who govern and those who are governed, the whole Body obtains the full and complete End, they did or could propose by first entering into Society; *i. e.* they have made the best and surest Provision for their Welfare and Happiness in this Life: And if in such a Society as this, Men have it fairly in their Power to understand and practise
the

the true Christian Religion, which by the Appointment of God is the necessary Means to secure Eternal Happiness in a Life to come, nothing is wanting to make the Condition of all those who are Members of it, as happy and blessed, as the present Condition of humane Nature will admit.

From what has been said then we may easily form a just Notion of the Greatness of the two Deliverances we this Day commemorate.

In the short Description I have attempted to give of a perfect Government, I have in Effect describ'd the *TRUE BRITISH CONSTITUTION*: And since to live under such a Government, is, as has been proved, to have all Means of Happiness fairly in our Power, It follows most evidently, that the Preservation of this happy Constitution in Church and State, from great and imminent Dangers, is really the greatest Blessing, which, as a Nation or People, we are capable of receiving. Now, That this was the happy Effect of both these Deliverances, which ought to make this Day ever memorable to *Englishmen* and *Protestants* is too plain to need any Proof.

The main Design of our Enemies was indeed to extirpate Heresy, *i. e.* in plain Words to abolish the Profession of true and uncorrupted Christianity, and to re-establish the *Romish* Religion: But the Means they made choice of to accomplish this Design, were such, as must, together with the Purity of the Christian Religion, have destroy'd the most valuable Rights and Privileges of a Free People. In the first Instance they resolv'd, by a most
horrid

horrid Invention, at once to destroy a *Protestant KING*, the whole Royal Family, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons, in Parliament assembled, that, under the Cover of that wild Confusion and Disorder which must then have overspread the Land, they might build up their own *Babel*, and model the whole Constitution Civil and Religious in that Manner which best suited their Inclinations. In the second Instance They apply'd themselves to manage the Dispositions of a weak unhappy bigotted Prince, to prompt him first to invade the Civil Rights of his Subjects, and to arrogate to himself an unlimited arbitrary Power in the Administration of the Government, that this Power might afterwards be employ'd to destroy the Legal Securities of our establish'd Church, and introduce, as the Stile of those Times was, the King's Religion.

And Had they succeeded in either Attempt, We at this Day must have been completely miserable: Had they succeeded in the former, Our Forefathers had first worn the galling Yoke, and had transmitted it down to us their Posterity: Had they succeeded in the latter, We had been doom'd to equal, *i. e.* in Truth to the greatest Wretchedness. For, to say all in one Word, We must either have died on the Scaffold; or at the Stake, or have liv'd *Slaves* and *Papists*.

But God was pleas'd in both Instances to bring to nought the Counsels of these wicked Men; In the first Instance, by a surprizing Discovery of their hellish Design, a few Days before that fix'd for the Execution; In the latter, by raising up to us a mighty Deliverer, the late Glo-

rious King *WILLIAM*, under whose Influence and Reign, the Truth and Purity of the Christian Religion, in Opposition to Superstition and Idolatry, and the Rights of a free People, in Opposition to Slavery and Oppression, were happily vindicated and restor'd to a flourishing State and Condition.

But, tho' this Great and Wonderful Deliverance was wrought for us, yet something was still wanting to complete our Happiness. To see what this was, and thereby to form a comprehensive Notion of the several gracious Dispensations of Divine Providence in our Favour, 'twill be necessary to proceed to the 3d thing propos'd.

3. To enquire whether there be any other Signal Mercy more lately vouchsafed to us, which may also require our solemn Thanks, and warrant our saying with *St. Paul*, that *God who deliver'd us from so great a death, doth yet deliver us.*

Now if, as has been prov'd, the late Revolution, and the Settlement which follow'd thereon, was a very great and valuable Blessing to these Nations, It does from thence most manifestly follow, that the limiting the Succession of the Crown to his present Majesty and his Issue, being *Protestants*, was a great and National Blessing also; Because this was the best way, which human Wisdom and Foresight could possibly make choice of, to secure the Continuance of our Happiness, and prevent our falling into new Confusions.

The Truth of this Assertion is, in point of Reason, as obvious as any Proof can make it: And yet in fact, it has happen'd, That now this Settlement has actually obtain'd

obtain'd, now that by a right Use of the Advantages we thereby became possess'd of, by an Union of Hearts and Affections to secure our common Interests, every Member of the Society might have a fair Capacity of enjoying the most valuable Blessings of Life, many are, by I know not what Infatuation, dispos'd to desire and attempt the Subversion of the present Government, and to turn their Eyes and Inclinations towards another Person, who, for the common Good of these Nations, is by Law rendered incapable of ever reigning over them.

To account for the Conduct of the vastly greater Part of these Men, upon any rational or consistent Principles, is utterly impossible: Some few indeed there are among them, who seem to act upon a mistaken Principle of Conscience, those, I mean, who having imbib'd false Notions of the Nature and End of Civil Government, and of the Will of God relating thereto, do hold that the late Revolution and, of consequence, the present Settlement of the Crown, are unlawful and not to be submitted to.

Now tho' from the clearest Maxims of right Reason, and from the Concessions also of many zealous Assertors of Passive Obedience, it most manifestly appears, that these Men have all along acted, and continue to act on mistaken and absurd Principles; yet as long as thro' the Weakness of their Understanding, or the Power of inveterate Prejudice, these Principles do to them appear to be true, it must be own'd that they go upon a consistent Foundation, and are therefore more Objects of Pity than Resentment.

But

But what shall we say of those Men who have outwardly acknowledg'd the Lawfulness of the present Settlement, have given the Government those legal Securities, by which Allegiance is more strongly bound on the Consciences of Men, and are ready, as often as there is occasion, to repeat them, and yet are in their Hearts and Affections, and, as far as they dare, in their Actions, Enemies to that Prince to whom they have vow'd Obedience, and Friends to him whom they have solemnly abjur'd? Can any thing be imagin'd more Wicked, more Foolish, than such a Behaviour? Wicked, inasmuch as they trample under foot the strongest Moral and Religious Obligations; Foolish, inasmuch as they do this in order to bring utter Ruin on themselves and their Country, to pull up the Foundations of Civil Liberty, and subject these Nations to the intolerable Yoke of *Romish* Superstition?

That these must be the dismal Consequences of any Revolution in Favour of the Pretender is so plain and obvious, that 'tis as truly astonishing all Men do not see it, as that any who do should wish or desire so unhappy an Alteration.

For what can at first View be more obvious, than that the Pretensions this Person has to the Crown of these Realms, are founded in the Doctrines of *Indefeasible, Hereditary Right*, and a *slavish unlimited Passive Obedience* relative to that Right, That these Doctrines lay a certain Foundation of *absolute Arbitrary Power*, and at once dissolve the Bands of all Laws, that are or can be fram'd to secure the Rights and Privileges of the People;
And

And consequently that He who derives under them must think himself free from all Obligation to grant any thing for their Good, any further than his own Disposition may prompt him, or the present Necessity of his Affairs may oblige him to captivate their Affections, by specious Shews and Professions: Which Necessity being remov'd, He may and doubtless must be well inclin'd to exert his utmost Strength, and exercise that Power of which he finds himself possess'd, in its most rigorous Extent. This we have Reason to apprehend, not only on account of that natural Fondness which Men possess'd of Power generally have for enlarging it, But on account also of those great Resentments which He has conceiv'd against these Nations, for Injuries He apprehends He has receiv'd from them: Resentments, which tho' for a time Prudence may oblige him to dissemble them, will yet probably revive on any favourable Juncture of punishing those who have abandon'd, or indeed tho' secretly well inclin'd, have not openly avow'd his Interests.

Against these Inclinations the most solemn Oaths and Promises are but a very weak Security: Daily Experience informs us of how little Force the strongest Moral Obligations are to repress and conquer the Impulses of Resentment or Ambition: And truly nothing can be more unreasonable, than that they whose whole Course of acting is built on the most manifest Contempt of such Obligations, should yet think or expect that others will be bound by them.

But besides this, every one who is acquainted with the Principles of the Church of *Rome*, cannot but know of how little Weight among them the most solemn Oaths are, which may be evaded by Equivocation and Mental Reservation, or dispens'd with and annull'd for the good of the Catholick Cause.

And this Consideration enlarges the gloomy Prospect, and plainly shews that our Condition under his Government must be as miserable with Respect to the Interests of Religion, as it would be with Respect to our Civil Rights; because by the express Laws * of the *Romish* Religion, to which He is so notoriously addicted, that He never would dissemble his Profession, even to facilitate His Attempts on the Crown, He is oblig'd in Conscience and under Pain of forfeiting his Dominions, to extirpate all Heresy: Which Obligation He himself will ever be dispos'd, and by the Influences of *Papish* Counsels, will daily be incited, and even *compell'd* to fulfill to the utmost of his Power.

The only Hope which *Protestants*, engag'd in these Views can rationally form to themselves of Safety or Indulgence is this, That Gratitude to those who promote his Interests, will oblige him to use them with Tenderness and Affection. But, alas! How weak and uncertain a Foundation of Security is this! For Gratitude, like Friendship, is a Virtue most common among Persons of inferiour Condition; the Seeds thereof are indeed naturally in the Breasts of Princes, as well as of other Men, but with them it must frequently give way to Reasons of

* Concil. Latæran. quart. Decret. 3. de Hæreticis. Harduini Concil. Tom. 7. p. 19, &c.

State; How much more likely then is it to be over-power'd by a furious bloody Zeal for Religion.

As this in Point of Reason is very probable, so has it in fact frequently happen'd, that Princes of the *Romish* Persuasion, who have lain under the greatest Obligations to their *Protestant* Subjects, and bound themselves also by solemn Promises, to allow them the free Exercise of their Religion, have yet in a moment cancell'd all these, and have treated those as Enemies, to whom they ow'd the Power they exercis'd against them. For instance,

When on the Death of King *Edw. VI.* the Succession to the Crown came to be contested, the Histories of those Times inform us, that many of the *Reformed Religion* espous'd the Interests of Queen *Mary*. To these Persons, She gave full Assurances, * that She would never make any Innovation, or Change, but be contented with the private Exercise of her own Religion: But as soon as the Crown was, chiefly by their Means, fix'd on her Head, She chang'd her Stile; Then to put her in mind of their Services, or her own Promises, was Insolence, and a Crime which deserved severe Punishment; and the poor deceived Loyal Men were equally with others expos'd to the Severities of that **bloody Reign**.

The same was yet more glaringly the Case of the *Protestants* in *France*: In the Civil Commotions rais'd in that Kingdom near the Beginning of the Reign of *Loüis XIV.* 'Tis notorious that they of the *Reformed Religion* universally espous'd the Royal † Cause: Their Services at that

* Burnet's *History of the Reformation*, Part II. pag. 237.

† *Histoire de l'Edit de Nantes*. Tom. 3. p. 150, &c.

time were thought so important, that † one of the King's great Friends declared, That the *Crown totter'd on his Head, but they had supported it.* Nay the King himself, in a publick * Instrument, own'd, that his *Subjects of the Reformed Religion had given him certain Proofs of their Affection and Loyalty, with which he was very well pleased.* These most important Services had indeed for a short time some good Effects; their Rights and Privileges were for the present confirm'd to them: But they were gradually infring'd, till at last this same King revoked the Edict of *Nantes*, in it self perpetual, and by him most solemnly confirm'd, and with the utmost Rage and Cruelty persecuted those who had been the main Instruments of his Preservation.

And thus also it in some Degree happen'd in the Reign of the late King *James*. Every one knows, that when in the foregoing Reign, a Design was formed to exclude him from the Crown, by an Act of Legislature, Many Members of the Establish'd Church, particularly the Bishops, most zealously espoused his Interests: And yet, tho' to a Sense of these Obligations, there was added the Religion of solemn re-iterated Promises to preserve the Government as by Law established in Church and State, a short Experience convinced them and the Nation, that all this was likely to be little regarded: The Rights and Liberties of the People were soon openly invaded; Men of the most distinguish'd Affection to his Person, were

† Histoire de l'Edit de Nantes, Tom. III. p. 154.

* Declaration donnée par le Roi Louis XIV. le 21. Mai. 1652. Voyez le recueil d'Edits &c. a la fin du troisieme Vol. de l'histoire de l'Edit de Nantes. le Nombre 6. p. 38.

told they must be of the *King's Religion* or lose his Favour: Several of those same Bishops who formerly had, perhaps with too great Warmth, espous'd his Interests, were harass'd with Imprisonment, and an illegal Prosecution at Law; And who can say, but the next Step would, if the Good Providence of God had not interpos'd, have been a bloody Persecution.

By these Instances you see how little the strongest Ties of Gratitude, and even the Obligations of solemn Oaths and Promises, avail, to procure Peace and Security to those of the *Protestant Religion* under a *Papish Prince*; the Governing Principles of his Actions must be, that all things are lawful for the Good of the Catholick Cause, and that Hereticks are to be destroy'd and rooted out: And if, by any Remains of Humanity in his Breast, He should be dispos'd to milder Measures, there never will be wanting a Number of bloody Priests and Jesuits to animate, and even under Pain of Damnation to force him to the most severe and bloody Executions.

From what has been said then we may clearly see how completely wretched in all valuable Respects the Condition of these Nations must inevitably be, if God for our Sins should permit the Designs of some among us to have their desir'd Effect; So that unless Men will believe, in Opposition to Reason and common Sense, that the Happiness of Mankind in this World is better secur'd by an *Arbitrary Tyrannical Government*, than by one that is *legal and limited*, and that with respect to the Concerns of a Life to come, 'tis more for their Advantage to be *persecuted for Righteousness sake*, than to

G

enjoy

enjoy the quiet unmolested Profession of the Christian Religion in its utmost Purity; Unless, I say, Men can believe these most plain and glaring *ABSURDITIES*, they must own that all Attempts to weaken and subvert the present Government, thereby to promote the Interests of the *Pretender*, are not only inconsistent with the Duty we owe to His present Majesty, which by many solemn Oaths we have more closely bound on our Consciences, but are destructive also of our truest and most valuable Interests. When therefore we turn our Thoughts

4. To consider how we ought to form our future Conduct, so as to manifest a rational and christian Gratitude for Benefits received; It appears to be absolutely necessary to this End, that we use our utmost Endeavours to support the present Establishment. For the best, indeed the only way, in which we can shew a just Sense of the Value of the Blessings we enjoy, is by striving to secure the Continuance of them; and there is no other possible way of effecting this, but by keeping our selves on the Foundation we now are.

Nor should we therefore suffer our selves to be amus'd or stagger'd with the Apprehension of Grievances. The Cry of Grievances is indeed at all times popular, and very apt to make too deep an Impression: And therefore to prevent the ill Effects of it, it ought always to be carefully remember'd, that not every Notion or Apprehension of Grievances, no nor every *real Grievance* neither, can justify Men's endeavouring *violently* to disturb or oppose a settled Government, either upon the
Maxims

Maxims of common Prudence, or those of the Christian Morality.

It appears from what has been said, that the common Good of Mankind can no way be effectually secur'd, but by entering into Society, and that no Society can subsist without some settled Form of Civil Government. Now in all Societies, different Men are acted by different Passions, and divided in their Interests and Inclinations; They therefore do and must entertain various Opinions of the Usefulness and Expediency of the Measures pursu'd by those who govern them: So that 'tis scarce possible that all should be equally satisfy'd with any Administration, however wisely conducted for the real Advantage of the whole Body. If therefore the Submission which by the Laws of Reason and Religion is due to lawful Governours, depended solely on the Judgment which every Man forms to himself of their Conduct; If a supposed or imaginary Grievance were a sufficient Ground for any, and in consequence all, to resist and oppose them, it would be impossible for any Society long to subsist, it must soon be destroy'd and torn in sunder by popular Commotions. Nay, tho' we should suppose the Grievances to be real, yet even here 'tis the Duty of Subjects to endeavour indeed by *just and peaceable Methods* to prevent or remedy the Evils they fear or suffer, but never unless in a Case of the greatest and most grievous Necessity, by *violent ones* to dissolve the Government and reduce themselves to a more deplorable State of Anarchy and Confusion.

Such

Such is the general Imperfection of Man's Nature, So great is the Uncertainty of all humane Concerns, that Men cannot but often fall short of the Expectations they have of Happiness in social Life; the Rule of Prudence therefore, and of the Christian Morality also is to chuse that Method of acting, which contributes most to their own and the common Good of Mankind: And doubtless 'tis more for the Good of the whole and of each Member of a Society to suffer some Inconveniences, which may probably be one Day peaceably remedy'd, than to endeavour the Change or Subversion of a Government, in its general Nature well calculated to answer the true Ends of its Institution.

By these Maxims, which are undoubtedly Rational and Christian, all Men ought to govern themselves in the Judgments they pass on publick Affairs, and if they do, then, tho' we should take the worst and most partial Representations of the Enemies of our present Settlement for Realities, and much more if we consider things candidly and impartially as they are in themselves, it will manifestly appear to be our true Interest, as well as our strict and indispensable Duty, every Man in his several Station, with the utmost Vigour and Alacrity, to concur in doing all things necessary to strengthen the Hands of His Majesty, and to preserve our present Constitution in Church and State: This is the only Way in which we can make any tolerable Provision for our own or the publick Happiness; This is one of the best Ways in which we can shew a Rational and a Christian Gratitude for the Blessings we have already received.

And

And to lay a sure Foundation of future Trust in the Divine Favour and Protection, 'tis further necessary, that We seriously and heartily set about the Reformation of our own Lives.

Tho' the receiving Blessings from the Hand of God, is not always an Argument that Men are Righteous, yet one End and Design of them is to make them so: And if the Perverseness and Obstinacy of the Receivers be such, that they are not to be wrought on by Benefits, the Wrath of God may probably be kindled against them, and his Voice be heard in dreadful Judgments.

Let then a just Sense of the extraordinary Blessings vouchsafed to us on the one Hand, And on the other, a just Fear, lest God in his Anger should withdraw from us the Light of his Countenance, at last prevail with us to use our best Endeavours to put a Stop to that infamous Corruption of Manners, that open Contempt of all things Sacred, that Torrent of Vice, Irreligion and Profaneness, that has well nigh over-spread the Land, and gives us but too just Grounds to apprehend, that We are even now ripe for Destruction.

If We neglect to do this, our Sacrifice of Praise will be an Abomination in the Sight of God, and 'twill be the highest Arrogance and Presumption any longer to expect, or rely on, a Continuance of the Divine Favour and Protection: But this if we do seriously and conscientiously, we may then with good Reason hope and trust, That the same God who hath formerly *deliver'd* our Forefathers and us *from so great Death*, and *doth yet deliver*, will in future Time also graciously *deliver us*.

F I N I S.

In Page .6. Line 12. for *ay*, read *as*.

